

STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2024



Carers NSW
Australia

Our Vision

An Australia that values and supports all carers

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Our Goals

Carers NSW aims to:

Be a leading carer organisation in which carers have confidence

Actively promote carer recognition and support

Actively support carers to navigate a changing service landscape that will be characterised by ongoing policy reform

Promote connected community experiences and opportunities for carers that are inclusive of diverse carer groups

Lead and advocate for carer-specific and carer-inclusive policy making, research and service delivery

Continue to be a quality-driven, responsive and carer-focused organisation

The role of carers in our communities has never been more important.

As greater numbers of people require care, and as Government policies and formal service systems change, informal care to help people remain in the community remains the foundation.

Well over 800,000 people in NSW – 13% of the population – provide care and support to a family member or friend. They come from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds, and live in communities throughout metropolitan, regional and remote NSW. Carers can be any age and include children and young people.

Being a carer can bring great satisfaction, but it comes with emotional, physical and financial impacts, and for many it is a 24 hour a day job.

Carers NSW understands this. As the peak non-government organisation for carers in NSW, its appreciation is built on deep and extensive connections with carers, and from expert knowledge of the research, the evidence, and the trends.

Our Values

Carer focussed

We

Ensure carers are at the centre of all that we do

Actively listen to and involve carers in all our activities

Act with empathy and aim to improve carers' wellbeing

Support carers' rights to make their own choices and direct their own lives

We will work to deliver practical benefits that focus on improving outcomes for all carers in NSW

Respectful

We

Treat all people with respect

Value all contributions and work to maximise opportunities for carers and for our staff

We value the individual contributions of our staff, Board, carers, members and volunteers. Our work is founded on good governance and quality business processes

Open & Inclusive

We

Advocate for and practise fairness and equity

Recognise the diversity of carers and the need to be responsive to differences in their caring responsibilities, circumstances and cultural backgrounds and locations

Value forward thinking, innovation and new ways of working

We will focus on all carers in NSW regardless of age, location, life-stage or caring circumstances and will adopt inclusive strategies that reflect carers' diverse circumstances and backgrounds

Accountable

We

Aim for quality in all our endeavours

Are honest, ethical and communicate with integrity

Maintain governance processes to uphold professional standing

We build on our professional standing as an accredited provider and deliverer of quality information and services and act professionally and make efficient use of our resources



Our Focus

Carers NSW operates with a single focus – to improve the lives of all carers.

This Plan has been developed to reflect this focus. It also reflects the key characteristics of the current environment which will help shape Carers NSW strategies and actions over the three-year life of the Plan. In particular:

Many carers do not identify as carers and are either unaware of the services available or experience other barriers to accessing them

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians are more likely to be carers due to high rates of disability and chronic health conditions in their communities

Carers from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities face specific barriers to accessing support

LGBTQI+¹ carers often remain hidden and tend to experience poorer health and wellbeing outcomes than other carers

The COVID-19 pandemic has underlined the isolation of some carers and highlighted the digital divide, but it has also led to innovative models of engagement and service delivery

Major aged care, disability and mental health service programs on which carers depend need to expand and continue to evolve

Carer Gateway has changed the way carers access and receive services. New service providers have emerged, together with new partnerships and collaborations

Carers NSW has taken on a key role in Carer Gateway, becoming a lead service provider in NSW, strengthening its knowledge and influence.

This Strategic Plan is built around four Strategic Directions

1. Informed carers and responsive communities
2. A policy environment that supports carers
3. Effective service delivery
4. A sustainable, high performing organisation

The Plan has been developed by the Board of Carers NSW during the first half of 2021 with input from carers and Carer Organisations, from government, stakeholders, researchers and from Carers NSW staff.

¹ Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and other sexuality, sex and gender diverse

Strategic Overview



Our Vision



Our Goals



Our Values

- 1 Informed and supported carers and responsive communities
- 2 A policy environment that supports carers
- 3 Effective service delivery
- 4 A sustainable, high performing organisation

1 Informed and supported carers and responsive communities

1.1. Maintain Carers NSW as the pre-eminent source of accurate, comprehensive and current information for carers

- 1.1.1. Continue to invest in research
- 1.1.2. Produce information, resources and services that are highly accessible
- 1.1.3. Promote Carers NSW profile as an independent, peak, non-government organisation

1.2. Reach more people, including at the point they first become carers

- 1.2.1. Increase engagement with Carers NSW by promoting what it offers to both new and longer-term carers
- 1.2.2. Strengthen links with the points in the service system where people first become carers, such as health services and schools

1.3. Help people to sustain their caring role

- 1.3.1. Promote the societal value of caring
- 1.3.2. Support carers' skills and resilience building

1.3.3. Link carers to mainstream and specialist providers of advice and training to support their caring role

1.3.4. Create strong partnerships with mainstream services supporting carers to increase accessibility and take-up

1.3.5. Continue to provide targeted support to under-represented and hard to reach groups of carers

1.4. Create carer-friendly communities which recognise the value of caring and respond to carers' needs

1.4.1. Promote carer inclusion and recognition

1.4.2. Increase the capacity of employers, educational providers, financial services and health providers to understand and meet carers' needs

1.4.3. Monitor and measure the impact of capacity-building initiatives within organisations to guide advocacy and service development

1.4.4. Research and report on the contribution of carers to organisations

Success

- ✓ Carers can readily access relevant information and advice regarding support opportunities and entitlements upon becoming a carer and whenever their circumstances change
- ✓ Carers NSW is a valued first stop shop offering comprehensive information and advice for carers across NSW
- ✓ Communities, including workplaces and places of education and training understand and are responsive to the needs of carers

2 A policy environment that supports carers

2.1. Engage in advocacy that is informed by the voices of carers

- 2.1.1. Consult regularly with carers throughout NSW, including through the biennial Carer Survey
- 2.1.2. Embed co-design as a standard technique to capture the expertise of carers

2.2. Sustain carers in their role by advocating for a service system that meets need and demand

- 2.2.1. Influence the expansion and reform of aged care services, and the growth and evolution of the NDIS
- 2.2.2. Work with government at all levels to develop services that are simple to access, understand and navigate
- 2.2.3. Achieve recognition that ongoing support is required to navigate and coordinate service systems

2.2.4. Use carer feedback and service delivery data to help shape the Carer Gateway model

2.2.5. Advocate for a well-trained and supported community care workforce to staff the services on which carers depend.

2.3. Advocate for policy change in key areas that impact carer wellbeing

2.3.1. Identify areas requiring advocacy for change through the systematic evaluation of policy and programs

2.3.2. Provide timely advice on changing government policies and actions to protect carers and the people they care for, particularly during periods of public health crises and disaster recovery

2.3.3. Promote policies that support the financial well-being of carers

Success

- ✓ The policy environment encourages and enables people to assume and sustain carer roles
- ✓ Government programs effectively support carers throughout the carer journey

3 Effective service delivery

3.1. Deliver high quality Carer Gateway services

- 3.1.1. Build and enhance service delivery processes
- 3.1.2. Produce high quality data
- 3.1.3. Share findings to enable the model to be refined and improved

3.2. Develop and deliver services that give carers the skills and support they need

- 3.2.1. Work with mainstream education and training providers to develop, tailor and deliver skill building programs for carers
- 3.2.2. Continue to expand the opportunities for carers to meet to share information and provide mutual support

- 3.2.3. Ensure that programs respond to the geographical, linguistic and cultural diversity of carers

3.3. Support evidence-based practice

- 3.3.1. Translate and utilise Carers NSW research findings to inform service delivery and program development
- 3.3.2. Conduct and support evaluations to inform the evidence-base

3.4. Become recognised experts in service design as well as delivery

- 3.4.1. Develop emerging products and services that address gaps in the current service system



Success

- ✓ Carers NSW services reach people when they become carers and offer timely support whenever required
- ✓ Carers NSW is recognised as a best practice service delivery agency
- ✓ Carers NSW demonstrated knowledge and expertise positively influences the performance of others

4 A sustainable, high performing organisation

4.1. Establish Carers NSW as an Employer of Choice

- 4.1.1. Promote Carers NSW profile as a “for purpose” organisation
- 4.1.2. Increase workforce diversity
- 4.1.3. Continue to provide a welcoming and supportive working environment

4.2. Develop strategies to support and implement Carers NSW Carer Gateway role

4.3. Utilise Carers NSW service delivery expertise to inform its advocacy role

- 4.3.1. Facilitate internal planning and knowledge sharing to incorporate learnings from service delivery into peak body functions
- 4.3.2. Utilise systemic knowledge gained from service delivery activities to inform the annual research program

4.4. Maintain a strategic focus on Carers NSW advocacy and service delivery

- 4.4.1. Continue to monitor and maximise the benefits arising from Carers NSW performance of both peak and service delivery functions and adjust if required

4.5. Enhance Carers NSW financial sustainability

- 4.5.1. Maintain operations that are efficient, and supported by robust systems and procedures
- 4.5.2. Diversify Carers NSW revenue sources with less reliance on short term funding from government

4.6. Maintain an agile culture in times of change

- 4.6.1. Adopt the organisational learnings from Carers NSW rapid response to COVID-19 into its culture and systems

4.7. Strengthen systems and infrastructure to support Carers NSW expanded service delivery role

Success

- ✓ Carers NSW is financially viable
- ✓ Carers NSW delivers quality services efficiently, effectively and transparently
- ✓ Carers NSW is carer-focused, agile and innovative
- ✓ Carers NSW is a culturally safe and inclusive organisation

Implementing the Plan

The Plan reflects Carers NSW ambition to increase its influence and impact to improve the recognition, support, inclusion, and wellbeing of all carers living in NSW.

The staff of Carers NSW will implement the strategies and actions in the Plan by working closely with carers, with governments, businesses, national and international Carer Organisations and with the community.

Carers NSW will report on the outcomes and review the Plan regularly to ensure that it remains fit for purpose to improve the lives of carers in NSW.



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AN AUSTRALIA THAT VALUES AND SUPPORTS ALL CARERS